

1: Burrows--98A
116; 612

(1947-48)

1-2
Woleaians
Ifalik

"As suggested by the bilateral extension of kinship terms, a bilateral group of relatives or kindred also exists in each individual's mind. Its existence is proved by the fact that there is a name for it, --airō. The name was used by Tom in telling me where visitors on islands other than their own look for hospitality. He said they stay with their airō.

'What does that mean--airo? ', I asked him.

'All same clan.'

Taking a wrong turn on Tom's translation, I wrote this down as a term for fellow-clansmen. Spiro, in his more intensive and more internalized study of kinship, found that the term expresses the concept of a kindred. By 'all same clan,' Tom meant that the airō is a group much like a clan. Spiro's inquiries also showed that Tom's use of the word to me in connection with hospitality was typical; in other words, that hospitality is the main overt expression of the feeling of unity within the airō. One treats his relatives on the father's side with the same open-handedness as those on the mother's side. Another, negative expression of this feeling is the extension of exogamy to patrilineal relatives.

An airō meets as a unit. The nearest to such a meeting is the taurang ceremony, when the girl whose first menstruation is being celebrated is adorned by the women of her father's as well as her mother's household, and marches with them afterward from her mother's to her father's homestead. Indeed, it is only for a rite of passage or similar

1: Burrows--98A

116, 612

(1947-48)

Woleaians-2

Ifalik

occasion, centered about one individual or at most one set of siblings, that such a group could very well assemble. For, by definition, its membership must vary for each set of siblings. Such groups are bound to exist mainly in the mind. No doubt that is why, as Murdock points out in 'Social Structure,' the existence of kindreds is frequently overlooked by ethnographers."